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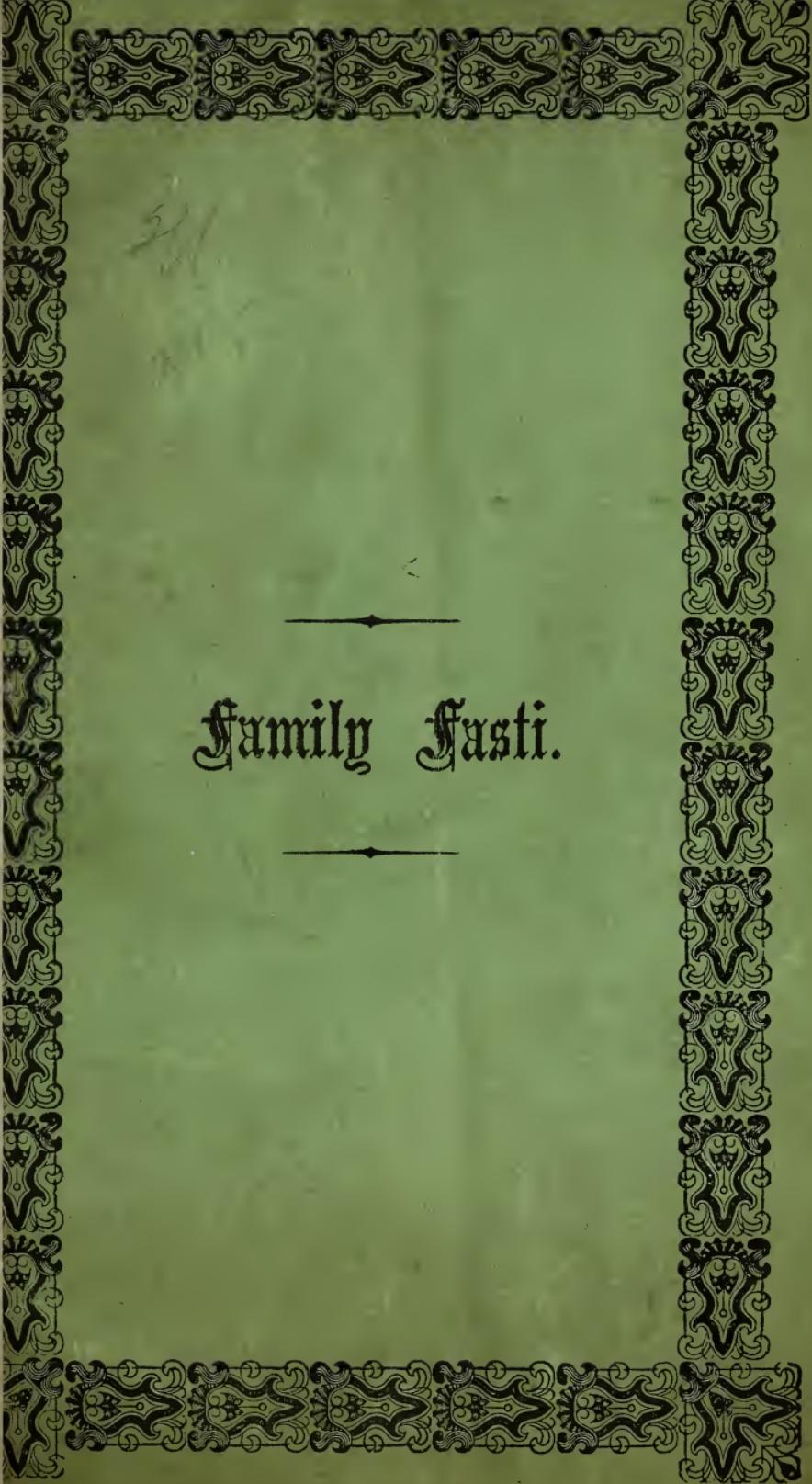
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Family Fasti.

FAMILY FASTI.

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BY

OWEN BLAYNEY COLE.
"

“With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture deck'd.”

GRAY'S ELEGY.

P O R T I S H E A D.

M D C C C L X I X .

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Lady Blayney.*

A sound of mourning and of woe
That spreads from house to house,
The mother weeping for her babes,
For her children and her spouse ;
There is weeping in the castle heard
By foes encompass'd round,
While the Baron's army is array'd
Upon a distant ground.

“ Oh weep not thus, my darlings,
Oh cease your bitter cry ;
Your mother's heart would you not break,
Who fain for you would die,
The Baron loves you dearly,
He comes with all his power
To chase the rebels, every one ;
He cometh in an hour.”

* There is an ancient Irish harp tune so called.

Thus spake the Baron's Lady
 Unto her trembling brood,
 But they heeded not her solacing,
 And the more their plaint renewed,
 For they marked her cheek so woebegone,
 The tears she would conceal ;
 A captive thrall in her own hall
 Was she to Shane O'Neale.

Thus spake the Baron's Lady,
 Nor knew that one stood near,
 A clansman leal of Shane O'Neale,
 Who triumphed in her fear ;
 "Behold," he cried, "the Lough beside
 Yon tree in sunny shine,
 On oak-tree ne'er such acorns were,
 When the lands belonged to mine !"

The Lady turned her at the word,
 And gazed upon the trees,
 What saw she there ? a sight I ween
 Her life-blood all to freeze,
 A struggling body there she saw,
 A-hanging by a rope ;
 Alack, she knew 'twas her kinsman true,
 Jevan Blaney of Kilcope !

But nothing recked they of her tears,
And she with them must speed,
For the Baron is upon the march
At hearing of her need,
From Mellefont he hath set forth,
And will be up anon,
So from Castle Blaney must depart
That Lady woebegone.

Through black morass and rifted mass,
Forlorn and deep distress,
The mother and her babes are led,
And one was at the breast;
Their cry of fear 'twas sad to hear,
But none are nigh to heal,
Compassion dwells not in the breast
Of the clansmen of O'Neale.

“Sweet Mother,” cried the Baron's heir,
“A sheep-skin I have found,
Who would have ever look'd to find
A sheep-skin on the ground!
Come, brothers, sister, share with me,
Thus blithely did he call,
“Come share this dainty meat with me,
There is enough for all.”

“ Why tarry thus, ye serpent spawn ? ”
 Cried Shane with impious taunt,
 “ A sheep-skin I have found,” he said,
 “ And I am sick with want.”
 But the rebel kern the boy did spurn,
 And pricked him with his pike,
 Ah surely ’twas a traitrous deed,
 The Baron’s heir to strike !

A daughter fair the Baron had,
 She was her father’s pride ;
 Her eyes were like the violet
 That grows the brook beside ;
 And she they swore should never more
 A wedder* look upon,
 For why should she have both her eyne,
 When Shane had only one.

With leathern bands they bound her hands,
 And villainous intent ;
 But One, whose eyes are never closed,
 Was present to prevent ;
 A pursuivant came posting haste
 From the towers of Mellefont,
 The Baron’s Lady to release,
 And her enemies confront.

* Anglice, a weather, a sheep.

“The Abbey to the Baron yields,
 Full many a Nun is there;
 Touch but the gentle Nina,
 And not an eye he'll spare.”
 As thus he spoke he pointed
 To the boundaries afar,
 Where the Baron's force pursued its course
 On the iron wings of war.

Benburb,* unclouded, overhead
 Regarded the array,
 Rejoicing in his brotherhood
 With the mountains far away,
 Where the Blayney banner oft had wav'd
 Beneath the Cambrian skies,
 Where the sacred hill of Snowdon
 And Cader Idris rise.

Uprode Lord Dacre of the Point
 As to a festival,
 Bold Bartley, Murdock, Anquetil,
 And good Lord Donegal,
 Fitz-Lucas of Cortolvin,
 Clanbrassil and his clan,
 Evatt, Lord Coote of Bellamont,
 And Scott of Monaghan.

* Chief of the Morne mountains, on the borders of Monaghan and Louth.

Montgomery led up the van
Armed for his kinsman's sake,
The Westenras of Camla
With Leslies of the Lake,
These with like chivalrous intent,
Of memorable name,
With many more, ere all was o'er
Unto the gathering came.

As when the sun and moon combine
To reunite their force,
The frightened tide leaps on the shore,
And floods the river's source ;
Before the Baron's army
Thus quailed the rebel foe,
O'Neales, Macmahons, and Macguires,
Scatter'd in overthrow.

Vainly the chieftains of that host
Invoked each patron saint,
'Twixt truth and treason to discern,
Eftsoons were they acquaint,
And those presumptuously bold,
Conviction who withstood,
Beneath steel flail and fiery hail,
Lay weltering in their blood.

Then the rebel rout, in fear and doubt,
To the Baron knelt for peace,
And humbly from his Lady now
Themselves sued for release ;
But the traitor Shane they did disdain,
And hanged him by a rope ;
Thus each did gain in bliss and bane,
Of friend and foe the hope.

THE foregoing ballad is founded on a document which came to the author by his descent from the principal sufferer, who was Jane, daughter of Gerald, first Viscount Drogheda. A short extract may serve for a specimen. The blanks occur in the original.

“* * * forty-one (1641) I was taken by the Mc Mahon and O’Neal party * * * One day I was brought into the dining-room and bid look out at the window, and I should see what fruit the tree bore; there they shewed me my cousin Richard Blayney (called Jevan in the Ballad) my Lord’s cousin german, hanging on a tree, and told me if my brothers or my Lord drew sword against them, I and mine should all suffer as my cousin Blayney had. And when the siege of Drogheda was raised, and the Irish heard that my own Lord and my brothers were with a party abroad,

seeking to relieve me, then they did bring me out of my own house and put me into a house in the town (of Monaghan); and when they had me and my eight children in the house they locked the door and set fire to the house, and it was almost burnt down, but — put me out before the house fell. Then they did take me to Anaghagh? and then they carried me and my children through the bogs and woods, from one wood to another, for then they would not let me be two days together in one place, and I had nothing to drink but water out of the puddle, nor had anything to eat but what we found thrown out. One of my children came to me with joy, and he told me they had got a sheep-skin, and that he had broiled it, and that it was very good meat, and brought me some to eat, which I and my children did eat heartily of without bread or salt. They would often threaten to kill me and my children, and told me it was no sin, for those out of the Ark were drowned, and those out of the Church were damned. * * * My daughter Penelope was upon the breast; the Nurse would sometimes lag behind, then they would beat her and take the child and put it on the butt of their pikes, and in one hour's time the child fell - - - times, which bruised her and broke one of her ribs, of which the child died soon after. I was - - - months in this sad condition."

The Abbot's Son.

WITHIN a green sequester'd vale,
A famous Abbey stood,
Embosom'd in the calm recess
Of a monastic wood ;
A fount upsprung the porch before ;
Alack, that fount is dry,
And Fountain's Abbey now appears
A name of mockery.

The tale I tell is of the days
When Rome with potent wand
Controlled the will of all who stooped
To her usurp'd command ;
'Twas when the rites of wedded love
Were by the Church denied
Unto the priest, who to the least
The bread of life supplied.

The Abbot he was of the race
Of Clifford, fam'd of yore,
A kinsman of the shepherd Earl,
Renown'd in poet's lore.
This priest did pair with a lady fair
Of Darcy's race who came,
And one dear pledge of secret love
Sprang from their mutual flame.

In mystery and solitude
 The Abbot's son was rear'd ;
 Mistrust obscured his infancy,
 No ray his cradle cheered ;
 And though no evil chance befell
 The house where he was nurst,
 For him the town of Pontefract
 Was deem'd a place accurst.

No parents' love his boyhood graced,
 In youth his father died ;
 His mother slept in cloister crypt,
 The Arno's shore beside ;
 But the noble blood of Clifford,
 Exulting in each vein,
 Purpled his cheek ; the stripling meek
 Outgrew the world's disdain.

The Bramble born in Wilderness,
 That knows no nurturing hand,
 Outlives the strawberry that grows
 In cultivated land,
 The Woodman's axe ne'er hews the oak
 That's rooted in the wild ;
 And he whom Fortune seems to scorn,
 Is oft her favourite child.

Thus fared it with the Abbot's Son,
Though pitiful his doom,
And though to chivalry unknown,
At Leeds he plied the loom;
Yet when, in sooth, a deed of ruth
Or courtesy was done,
The man whose name was dear to fame,
It was the Abbot's Son.

Belov'd by those of his degree,
And trusted for his worth,
Yet downcast was his countenance,
Unknowing of his birth :
Bound to his breast for amulet
Was a lock of silken hair,
Which vainly he did question oft
His lineage to declare.

And now it chanced that strife prevailed
'Twixt those by birth allied,
And Church and State were like a sword,
Keen-edg'd on either side ;
Now did the Five Wounds of our Lord
Upon Asque's banner bleed,
And to the Pilgrimage of Grace
Flocked men of varied creed.

Foremost of that devoted band
The noble Darcy fought;
The wounds of Christ were all his own,
Death he regarded nought;
To Leeds they bore the wounded knight;
And when the field was won,
The man who sat at his bedside,
It was the Abbot's Son.

All ye who trace the paths divine,
Give ear unto my strain;
Inscrutable the mind of God,
His purposes remain;
Lord Darcy by a token true,
The talisman he wore,
Discovered in the Abbot's Son
The child his sister bore.

Thus from his low estate was rais'd
A stem of Clifford's tree;
But still he plied the Loom, for such
Was Darcy's firm decree;
And save the few who list my strain
Belike knows ever a one,
How the first baronet of Leeds
Sprang from the Abbot's Son.

The Red Hall.

WHOEVER of Leeds the heart would view,
Mould'ring within its wall,
Let him the labyrinth pursue
That leads to the Red Hall;
The citizens in folk-lore taught,
Cherish its old renown;
And the Red Hall is ever sought
By strangers to the town.

For there awhile abode the King,
Heir of a martyr'd race,
And yet his memory doth fling
A halo round the place;
'Twas there of Britain's realm the head
Of Mary's child the son
Partook affliction's bitter bread,
To death while journeying on.

'Twas there in prayer and penitence
He fought with hidden foes,
Toiling to raise a sacred fence
Against predestin'd woes;
Anointed by the King of kings,
He laid his sceptre down,
And at the everlasting springs
Found his baptismal crown.

Therefore to the Red Hall repair
 Those who revere his name,
 Hoping to find the shadow there
 Of England's pride and shame,
 But novelty their path will check
 Amid the ruin'd past,
 Who meet the present which doth reck
 Only of what comes last.

The monarch died, the martyr shone
 'Mid the celestial throng ;
 The house that Slingsby first did own
 To another did belong ;
 A burgher, Beattison by name,
 At the Red Hall abode ;
 He lived exempt from sin and shame
 And in his carriage rode.

When that the Royal Cavalier
 Would rally from his fall ;
 Quoth Beattison, " His grandsire dear
 Has dwelt in the Red Hall,
 But now King George is King of Leeds,
 And may not be denied ;
 Pretender Kings and courts and creeds,
 Shall ne'er with me reside,

My forefathers for the good cause,
 Have bled in days of yore,
 Protected now by better laws
 Why should their sons bleed more ?
 The sun," quoth he, " of yesterday
 Was monarch of the scene,
 But what avails its kindling ray,
 When night upholds its screen.

My business 'tis to serve the king,
 Who of himself takes care ;
 And if the summer help the spring,
 We all shall plenty share."
 The royalty of number one,
 The right of his own head ;
 The motto this of Beattison,
 As plainly might be read.

While thus his theme, the rumour ran,
 Of troubles in the north,
 And how Prince Charley led the van,
 Whose retinue was dearth;
 At Hexham hath his banner been,
 Since fierce Culloden's sun ;
 Woe to the Yorkshire meadows green,
 If he set foot thereon.

“The King,” quoth he, “upon the throne,
The land our flocks that feeds,
The only watchword this we own,
In the good town of Leeds ;”
Obedient to the burgher’s word,
The town was fast array’d ;
The loom was idle and the sword
Each citizen displayed.

The walls he manned and eke the plain,
With footmen and with horse ;
Nor force nor craft did he disdain,
To quell th’ invading force.
Confronted, the Pretender then
Pursued his march afar,
Else, haply, Leeds had been the den
Of fratricidal war.

King George extolled brave Beattison,
And service to requite,
Invited him to London town
And dubbed the burgher, knight ;
But vain was George’s power I ween
To free from careful thrall,
For oft a hand is redly seen
To point to the Red Hall.

The Loyal Jane.

WITH favouring gales, from London town,
Was sped the Loyal Jane ;
Tom Larramer this ship did own,
Ralph Audley his coxswain.

With merchandise was she well stow'd,
Broad-cloth and hard-ware freight,
Nine hundred tons and more the load
Was this good vessel's rate.

Her course for Richmond she pursued,
American this town ;
No other in Virginia stood
Its equal in renown.

Wafted by gales, Tom Larramer,
Dry land again espied ;
But when for harbour he would steer,
Free passage was denied.

Appeared a cutter on the wing
Whose signal read aright,
Was this,—prepare for Charles the King
With all thy guns to fight !

Our Captain's questions to cut short,
 Went booming o'er the wave,
 A round shot from St. James' Fort ;
 Our figure-head it clave !

Now yield thee to the Governor,
 'Tis Berkeley we proclaim,
 And him who's his prime minister,
 Nat Bacon is his name !

To Bacon law with honest guile,
 Doth Larramer consent ;
 Compell'd to feign an alter'd style,
 With grief his heart was rent.

Dishonouring the Loyal Jane,
 The porkers throng her decks ;
 Though flush'd with generous disdain,
 Prudence our captain checks.

'Till fortune favouring his cause
 Occasion gives and then
 The rebels find that he has claws,
 Caught in the lion's den.

Not long our captain stands in doubt,
 Which governor's preferred ;
 Bacon's pretences aid him nought,
 Since Berkeley's wrath is stirr'd.

Through shot loud thund'ring from the fort,
 Sir William Berkeley steers ;
 And with this proclamation short,
 Tom Larramer he cheers.

“Thee, Commodore hereby I make ;
 And every bark and ‘buss’
 That in James’s river thou shalt take,
 Do thou secure for us.”

With that the governor sends aid,
 The Loyal Jane to man ;
 Despite rebellious flags display’d
 By Bacon’s lawless clan.

Day after day and nothing loth,
 Good service it was done,
 By Larramer and Audley both,
 ’Till Richmond town was won.

. From among my Larramer papers I select the two following, premising that the “Loyal Jane” has been substituted for the “Loyal Rebecca,” the real name of my ancestor’s ship.

“From Sir William Berkeley to Cap. Larrimar.

“Capt. Larrimer,—Having seen your letter, I

most heartily attest your Loyalty, and have sent this —with such force as you have thought needful, nothing doubting but yourself and shipp's company will loyally perform your parts, for which I hope God will make me able; and I assure you I will always be ready to make you full satisfaction; and by having reduced your shipp to his Majesty's service, I doubt not but soon after to bring all the Rebels to their duty and condign punishment.

“I am your friend to serve you,

“Wm. BERKELEY.”

“Certificate of Signal.

“This may certify all whom it may concern, that the ship Rebecca, Thomas Larrimer, Captain, sayled by his Majesty's shipp Bristol, then rideing in James' River, the tenth day of Feby 167⁶/₇, she having on board Prisoners, and in service of the Governor and Collony at Virginia.

“In testimony whereof I sett my hand this

14 7ber, 1677.

“JOHN BERRY.”

The Cryste of Turgesius.

AT TARA grew a stately stem beyond the palace wall,
It was a royal Celtic oak, and was both broad and
tall;
But King Melachlin hewed it down and sent it to
Lough Lene,
Where the heart of oak became a boat ere many moons
had been.

By twenty stalwart youths 'twas borne and steeds to
Lough Lene's isle,
When set afloat flags decked the boat, the billows
kissed its side,
Then the King and court did there resort in bridal
garb bedight;
For in Lene's isle must Devergyl with Turgesius
wedlock plight.

Fair are the Isles of Greece, they say, where Homer
lived and sung,
But isle more green than on Lough Lene from water
never sprung;
There in his cell, with book and bell, abode an
anchorite,
To whom 'twas given, of trespass shriven, to conse-
crate the rite.

Of all Fowre's blest fraternity the holiest brother
deemed,

And for his gift of prophecy above the rest esteemed;
By tutelary ravens fed like Carmel's seer of yore,
Save when his pious votaries supplied him from their
store.

Melachlin he was King of Meath, and wore the chain
of gold,

His daughter's name was Devergyl, with virgin
charms untold;

But Turgesius swore that never more should war in
Erin reign,

When she had left her lowly nest for the eyrie of the
Dane.

From Pagan creed and idols freed good Christian for
her sake,

For the hammer of rebellious Thor the cross he would
partake;

The skull-bowl of Walhalla should ne'er be quaff'd
again,

His bark he'd steer for Paradise despite the Valkyr's
chain.

From his mountain nest on Ion's crest the Viking he
hath sped,

And on Lene's lake of Learning waits with loving
arms outspread;

Around their chief nine warriors stand, for amity
array'd,

And the sable banner peacefully is to the breeze
display'd.

Towards the island speeds the barge, the oars by
maidens plied,

Lo ! Devergyl in bridal wreath is by Melachlin's side ;
For their greater joy those maidens coy have learn'd
the swan-like sleight,

But when maidens row the boat moves slow, from
want of manly might.

Woe to the Dane ! a traitrous shaft has pierc'd him
to the heart,

No maidens gay but bowmen they, each hides a
winged dart,

With vengeful roar they spring ashore, mid groans
of those who bled ;

On that bridal morn full many a thorn entwined
Turgesius' head.

For her spouse in vain sued Devergyl, vainly had
sued for grace,

Turgesius fell ere yet in death clasp'd in her fond
embrace ;

Upon Lough Lene no Dane, I ween, remained the
tale to tell,

How bravely on his trysting-day their king Targesius
fell.

. Lough Lene is one of the many fine lakes in Westmeath, where by some the tragedy is transferred to Lough Deravara. The ruins of the anchoret's cell still subsist, as do the extensive ruins of the ancient Abbey of Fowre. Some time since a piece of iron resembling a spear head was found on the island, seeming to confirm the tradition.

The romance is thus quoted from Sir W. Ware, by Piers, in his History of Westmeath:—"In A.D. 845, This Danish or Norwegian chieftain (Turgesius), to whom so many of the Raths are ascribed, fell in love with the daughter of Melachlin, king of Meath; and the king, with malicious intent, granted him his daughter, and promised to send her to Lough Vair, with fifteen other beautiful maidens. Turgesius, well-satisfied, came to the place appointed with the like number of his nobility, and found in the island fifteen beardless youths, chosen out for the purpose, and clad in woman's apparel, who under that habit concealed their weapons, with which they treated Turgesius and his company instead of the embraces which they expected."

The Eagle's Child.

THERE dwelt in Richmond's royal wood
A yeoman bold and true,
Though time had somewhat chill'd his blood
And dimm'd his piercing view.

His forest green he loved to don,
The fallow deer to chase ;
And when King Hal lacked venison,
'Twas his the board to grace.

And now it chanced upon a day
As to the chace he sped,
He marked an eagle with his prey,
A-hovering overhead.

His tough cross yew the Bowman drew,
And poured his shafts amain ;
But though the Eagle nearer flew,
His archery was vain.

And nearer yet, and yet more near,
As by a purpose sway'd,
The Eagle flew—his hand in fear
The doubting woodsman stayed.

Now wing'd with wonder and despite,
 An arrow leaves the string ;
 The Eagle screams, veers in his flight,
 And to the clouds doth spring.

But from his loosen'd grasp the prey,
 Drops in the pool below,
 Plunging beneath the flashing spray,
 Then reappearing slow.

The woodsman doth he dote or dream,
 Or is his sight beguil'd,
 Or can it be that in the stream
 He spies an infant child ?

'Twas a fair infant feminine,
 In wicker cradle bound,
 Of life still showing flutt'ring sign,
 And every limb is sound.

The woodsman straight the babe with care,
 Unto his dame conveyed ;
 It was an infant passing fair,
 In lace and pearls array'd.

“ Be this thy sporting, gaffer mine ? ”
 Quoth then the housewife shrewd,
 “ And must our gracious master dine
 Off children in the wood ? ”

“ When cherubs come down from the sky
 ’Tis not for food i’sooth ; ”
As thus the woodsman spoke, his eye
 Was bright as in his youth.

“ The King may eat of fish or fowl,
 Or fast from all but sin,
Or he may troll the nut-brown bowl ;
 This babe he ne’er may win.

’Tis true as a miracle,” he cried,
 “ More than if wrought by priest ;
They who have heav’n to-day for guide,
 To-morrow, sure, shall feast ! ”

Prophetic were the words he said
 Ere many years had flown,
That babe became a beauteous maid,
 And wed the yeoman’s son.

And now as in the days of old,
 Is many an hour beguil’d
With legends of the woodsman bold,
 Who won the Eagle’s child.

The Changeling.

O'ER an infant's cradle bending
Ginevra sings by night,
Where the moonbeams soft descending
Flood the room with light.

“Sleep, Baby mine, sleep till To-morrow
Then awake to bliss;
All unconscious thou of sorrow,—
Emblem of a kiss!”

Her maternal fancies winging,
By weariness opprest,
Droops her lovely head while singing
One second on her breast.

“Gentle Lady,” thus in warning
Her Guardian Angel spake,
“Beware of slumber until morning,
Else to grief awake!”

Soon she sleeps, the voice unheeding,
Lull'd by her lullabies,
Repose, alas, Ginevra, needing,
Clos'd are now thine eyes !

When she 'woke 'twas to her sorrow
A wizen'd elfin shred
She beheld upon the morrow
In her darling's stead.

Tristrem's Feast.

SIR TRISTREM pledged himself, secure
Return'd from Palestine,
That on St. Lawrence's Day the poor
Should in his castle dine ;
Battling with the grim Moslemite
Upon that festal day,
The saint himself, with falchion bright,
Had holpen in the fray.

Restor'd to home and board and bed,
When the promis'd morn appeared,
His table was with dainties spread,
With silver flagons cheer'd ;
The manciple stood at the gate
To number every guest
That with sufficient for his state
The hungry might be blest.

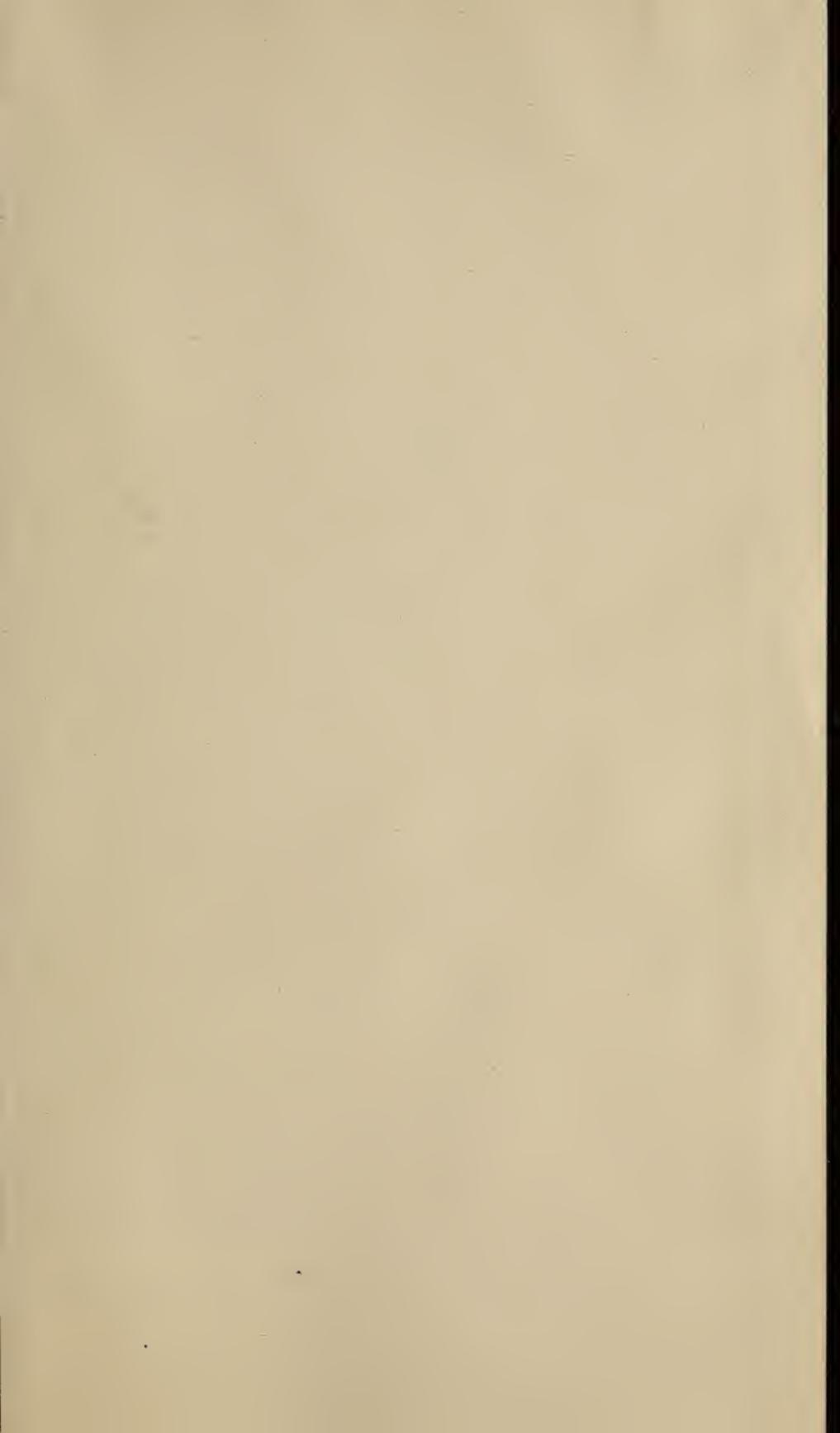
Fast flew the morn, slow crept the noon,
Guest was there none at all,
Nor yet when Compline brought the moon
Was visitant in hall ;
Cried Tristrem, starting from his chair,
“ Beshrew my weary vow,
Odds boddikins, I would it were
To-morrow morning now !”

Scarce had the knight the saint defied
 His guests who led astray,
 When a sudden cloud o'ercanopied
 The starry Milky Way ;
 Clamoured the wind, flashed fiery ball,
 The thunder cracked his whip,
 And guests began to throng the hall
 Fast as the rainy drip.

The castle it was throng'd with guests
 From dais to buffèt,
 But 'stead of neighbours from their nests,
 Came Firbolgs wan and grey,
 King Donagh led the pilgrims lean,
 His crown upon his head ;
 With him was the Milesian Queen,
 Whose roses long had fled.

Perch'd on the board in magic ring,
 Feasted each Leprechaun,
 And ere they parted spoke the king—
 'Twas ere the peep of dawn—
 “ Farewell, Sir Tristrem the Renown'd,
 The spell is sever'd now,
 When next St. Lawrence's Day comes round,
 Beshrew not thou thy vow !”

* * * At Howth Castle, in the Bay of Dublin, where this legend is traditional, the sword of Tristrem is still preserved.



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